



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 May 2025

by **Martin H Seddon BSc MPhil DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/D/25/3361834

43 Dunham Road, Altrincham, Trafford, WA14 4QG

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Jiang against the decision of Trafford Council.
 - The application Ref is 114702/HHA/24
 - The development proposed is conversion of garage to habitable accommodation including roof lantern. Erection of single storey side and rear, and lower ground floor rear extensions. Installation of roof-light to front elevation. Erection of car port and associated landscaping including enlargement of driveway/turning space and water feature.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I am advised that the Council altered the description of the proposed development following the submission of revised plans during the application process. The appellants did not request the change in description. However, in view of the revised plans I have determined this appeal on the basis of the Council's description of development.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the building and property and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Devisdale Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal building is a detached house known as Deep Fields. It was built within the curtilage of the adjacent house of Oakleigh between 2014 and 2015. It lies within an area characterised by large dwellings mainly set in their own grounds with lawned areas and mature tree cover. Deep Fields is located within Character Zone A (Northern Residential) of the conservation area, as defined in the Devisdale Conservation Area Appraisal. It is situated between the two positive contributor buildings of Oakleigh and Hurst Dale.
5. In accordance with the duty imposed by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 I am required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the

conservation area. Moreover, paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that when considering the impact of new development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

6. The conservation area is named after The Devisdale, a historic area of unenclosed flat land at the top of Bowdon Hill. It includes the wooded north slope of the hill and the gentler west slope towards Dunham Massey. The planning of the area was closely controlled by the Earl of Stamford to create a social neighbourhood to nearby Dunham Park. Its significance and special interest include development in the second half of the 19th century, characterised by houses on a grand scale, set in large plots at a low density with magnificent gardens, sweeping drives and coach houses. There are many large, fine, individual residences in the area, in a variety of architectural styles. Some of the houses are the work of renowned architects.
7. Planning permission for a much larger dwelling on the site was approved by the Council in September 2011, prior to permission being granted for the dwelling that was built.
8. In March 2019, the Council granted permission for the conversion of the attached garage to habitable accommodation, erection of a single storey side and rear extension, a rear glazed garden room, timber framed car port and associated landscaping. However, the scheme was not implemented and the permission has lapsed.
9. The proposed conversion of the garage to habitable accommodation including roof lantern is of a different design compared to the permitted proposal. It would have the same width, but greater in length by around 700 mm. It would have a flat roof to match that of the existing garage, with roof lanterns, and would be built in brick. The use of matching brick and insertion of arched windows would be more in-keeping with the design of the building than the previously approved scheme. However, the garage is close to the boundary with Hurst Dale and the increase in length of the building would add to its bulk and massing, thereby reducing the already limited space around the building at this point and harming the setting of Hurst Dale as a non-designated heritage asset.
10. The lower ground floor rear infill extension would also be built in brick with three large window openings. Its location would not harm the sense of spaciousness of the site because it would face an enclosed sunken courtyard. Although the original plans were amended to include brick pillars in the fenestration, the proposed windows would conflict with the vertical emphasis of the existing fenestration and would detract from the character and appearance of the rear elevation of the house.
11. The proposed side extension is intended to replicate a Victorian style orangery. It would appear subservient to the main building but would reduce the separation distance of development from Oakleigh. Moreover, it would have a significant area of associated hardstanding.
12. The proposed erection of a car port and associated landscaping, including enlargement of driveway/turning space and water feature would be a similar

development to that previously granted permission in 2019. However, these elements would add to the overall amount of development and hardstanding sought at the site in this appeal.

13. Taken as a whole, the proposed development, with its additional built form and hardstanding areas, would conflict with the objectives of the Devisdale Conservation Area Management Plan. These include that development would be inappropriate if it involves a significant loss of grounds in favour of hardstanding or parking or includes extensions to the side which will significantly reduce the intervening space between the existing building and the plot boundary.
14. I find that the built development and hardstanding areas of the amount proposed would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the building and property and would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Devisdale Conservation Area. The harm to the conservation area as a whole and its significance would be less than substantial because of the degree of visual enclosure of the property when viewed from Dunham Road. Paragraph 215 of the Framework indicates that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. However, the benefits from the proposed development would primarily constitute private benefits, rather than public benefits, and would not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area as a designated heritage asset.
15. The proposed development therefore conflicts with policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of the PFE Joint Development Plan which amongst other things seek to ensure that development conserves and enhances the historic environment, and policy R1 of the Trafford Core Strategy which requires new development to take account of historic distinctiveness. It would also conflict with the heritage objectives of the Framework.

Conclusion

16. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan as a whole and should be dismissed.

Martin H Seddon

INSPECTOR